functions, finances and functionaries — the crux of Power to the Panchayats — are vested entirely in State Legislatures, reinforcing the inclusion of Panchayati Raj in the State List of the Seventh Schedule.

2. The first task before the Ministry was to evolve a national consensus in respect of the Roadmap for Panchayati Raj through mutual consultation between the Centre and the States. Ministry of Panchayati Raj convened Seven Round Tables of State Panchayati Raj Ministers with the Union Minister of Panchayati Raj between July and December, 2004. The deliberations centered on the 18th identified dimensions of Panchayati Raj ranging from the effective Devolution of the Functions, Finances and Functionaries to District Planning, Training and Capacity Building and IT-enabled e-governance. At the conclusion of each Round Table, nearly 150 action points comprised in the Compendium were unanimously adopted by all Panchayati Raj Ministers and referred to Chief Ministers for their approval. This has become a National Roadmap for effective Panchayati Raj.

3. A Committee of Panchayati Raj Secretaries was constituted to monitor the progress and implementation of these 150 Action Points. This Committee of Secretaries headed by the Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj would also service the Council of Panchayati Raj Ministers. The Committee of Secretaries has held seven meetings. The Council of Ministers has been convened thrice, at Kochi, Kerala in August, 2005, at Bhubaneswar, Orissa in June, 2006 and at Delhi in January, 2007 respectively.

Strengthening women Panchayat heads

1101. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) the number of women Panchayat heads in the country, with particular reference to Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the help his Ministry sought from the NCW to strengthen women Panchayat heads in the country;

(c) whether there are any plans to set up State Panchayat Raj Mahila Sangathan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Information is at Statement (*See* below).

(b) The National Commission for Women have agreed in principle to provide training support in Legal Awareness to women Panchayati Raj representatives through selected NGOs, both in terms of financial and human resources.

(c) and (d) The Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan — a movement to strengthen the elected women of the PRIs — has been initiated under the aegis of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and the "Chalo Gaon Ki Ore" rubic of the National Commission for Women. A core group comprising selected EWRs, activists, academics etc. is nominated by the State Government/ Government of India to draft and facilitate a draft women's charter for the EWRs of the State stating thereon their particular issues. Subsequently, all women Zila Pramukhs, all women Pradhans and selected women Sarpanchs from each district of the State, as well as Core Group members and some eminent personalities are invited to a said two day conference of panchayat women. A women's charter comprising all the major points distilled from the discussions with the women representatives of the PRIs is then finalized.

'The Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan has been conceptualized to initiate awareness about the gender issues in governance and to facilitate Elected Women Representatives in performing their mandate to the best of their abilities. Most EWRs see themselves as isolated and unorganized, functioning without the support of a structure and have spoken of the need to form into groups or associations so as to be part of a forum that addresses their special needs in a largely male-dominated social and political milieu. So far, conferences of elected women representatives, activists, NGOs, eminent personalities have been held as under:—

1. Udaipur (Rajasthan) — 23rd & 24th April, 2006.
2. Patiala (Punjab) — 17th & 18th July, 2006.
3. Bangalore (Karnataka) 5th September, 2006.
4. Dehradun (Uttaranchal) on 24th September, 2006
5. Imphal (Manipur) — 4th & 5th October, 2006.
6. Panaji (Goa) — 19th October, 2006.

Besides the State-level Conferences, a one-day divisional-level conference was also held on 29th November, 2006 at Jaipur in Rajasthan. In the State of Assam, the conference is to be held on 18th & 19th March, 2007. In the State of Sikkim, the conference will the beld on 20th and 21st April, 2007 at Gangtok. Such conferences are planned for other States as well, including Andhra Pradesh.

Statement

State-wise number of Women Panchayat Heads in the country

Sl. No.	Name of State	Women Heads		
		Gram Panchayat	Panchayat Samiti	Zilla Parishad
	States:	**Sarpanches**	**Adhyakshas**	**Chairman**
1	Andhra Pradesh	7266	366	7
2	Arunachal Pradesh	645	44	6
3	Assam	*	*	*
4	Bihar	3784	237	18
5	Chhattisgarh	3282	51	6
6	Goa		Election is due	
7	Gujarat	*	*	*
8	Haryana	2112	62	8
9	Himachal Pradesh	1109	29	4
10	Jammu & Kashmir	*	*	*
11	Jharkhand		Election is due	
12	Karnataka	*	*	*
13	Kerala	356	54	5
14	Madhya Pradesh	7864	123	21
15	Maharashtra	9296	117	11
16	Manipur	54	*	2
17	Orissa	*	*	*
18	Punjab	2871	52	6
19	Rajasthan	*	*	*

1	2	3	4	5
20	Sikkim	33	0	1
21	Tamil Nadu	4313	140	10
22	Tripura	216	8	2
23	Uttar Pradesh	*	*	*
24	Uttaranchal	2445	34	6
25	West Bengal	995	102	6
	Union Territories:			
1	A & N Islands	24	3	0
2	Chandigarh	6	0	0
3	D&N Haveli	4	0	1
4	Daman & Diu	6	0	0
5	Lakshadweep	4	0	0
6	Pondicherry	*	*	*

Note:*Information unavailable at present.

Gram Panchayat prize money

1102. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether best Gram Panchayat Award was declare for Devsar (Tehsil Gandevi, Distt. Navsari) and Thamma (Distt. Anand) villages of Gujarat in the year 2004;

(b) whether consolation prizes of Rs. 10 lakhs to each Gram Panchayat mentioned above was also declared and payment of the amount has not been made till date;

(c) whether Government have received any request from the concerned Gram Panchayats for payment of the dues; and

(d) the action taken for early payment so as to enable the Gram Panchayats to take up development works?